addition of agricultural commodities including poultry, meat, dairy, fisheries etc. in a demand driven manner. Financial assistance has been enhanced to 50% of project cost excluding land component in general areas and 75% in difficult areas, subject to a maximum of Rs. 50.00 crore for setting up of Mega Food Parks. 'In-principle' approval has been accorded in case of setting up of 10 Mega Food Park projects in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Detailed Project Report (DPR) in case of Andhra Pradesh (Chittoor), Assam (Nalbari), Jharkhand (Ranchi) and Uttarakhand (Haridwar) has been approved and 1st tranche of 1st instalment of grant has been released in these cases.

Improvement in Food Processing

2681. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is confident that by removing the existing constraints, the country could emerge as a global leader in food processing sector;

(b) whether PM has pointed out that despite being largest producer of milk, pulses and tea in the world, India's share in global food trade was almost negligible;

(c) whether the level of processing in the country is extremely low at about 6 per cent compared to 60-80 per cent in the developed countries; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps and the measures Government proposes to take to improve food processing in the country?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is confident that by removal of existing constraints, the country can emerge as a global leader in food processing sector. During the 1st Conference of State Food Processing Ministers and other stake holders held on 06.10.2009, Hon'ble PM observed that there is a need to increase the level of food processing to global standards.

(c) and (d) On the basis of Vision 2015 on Food Processing Industries adopted by the Ministry, an integrated strategy and action plan for the growth of food processing industry sector has been drawn up to improve the current low levels of food processing in the country. The objective of the Strategy is to increase level of processing of perishable food from 6% to 20%, value addition from 20% to 35% and share in global food trade from 1.5% to 3%. The level of processing for fruits and vegetables is envisaged to increase to 10% and 15% in 2010 and 2015 respectively.

For the development of the food processing sector, the Government has taken various initiatives to strengthen the Food Processing Infrastructure, Government has approved a scheme for Mega Food Parks, Cold Chain, Value Added Centres and Modernization of Abattoirs. The

Infrastructure scheme envisages a well-defined agri/horticultural-processing zone containing state of the art processing facilities with support infrastructure and well established supply chain. It aims to provide a mechanism to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages and improving farmers' income. The primary objective of the scheme is to facilitate establishment of an integrated value chain, with processing at the core and supported by requisite forward and backward linkages.

Other strategic initiatives during 11th Plan include scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Preservation Infrastructure including Controlled Atmosphere/Modified Atmosphere Storage, Value Added Centres, Packaging Centres and Irradiation facilities.

Benefits of the Scheme will also be available to integrated projects of value addition/processing/preservation of horticulture, dairy, marine, and meat sector. Another infrastructure development scheme is for setting up/up-gradation of food testing laboratories which would benefit all stakeholders including domestic industry, exporters, entrepreneurs, small and medium enterprises, existing academic & research institutions, food standards setting bodies.

Modernization of Abattoirs is a scheme targeting infrastructure for the meat processing industry. It aims to upgrade qualitative and quantitative capacities of the abattoirs, which will be linked, with commercial processing of meat, both for domestic consumption and exports. The financial assistance (grant-in-aid) is being extended at 50% and 75% of the cost of plant & machineries and technical civil works in general and difficult areas respectively subject to a maximum of Rs. 15 crores for each project. The Ministry has approved 'in principle' to set up ten abattoirs in the country with a total cost of Rs. 127.00 crores. An amount of Rs.7.94 crores has been released.

Further, the Ministry has several other schemes for promotion of the food processing industry. The Scheme for Technology Upgradation/Establishment/ Modernisation of Food Processing Industries is aimed at creation of new processing capacity and up-gradation of existing processing capabilities, modernization of Food Processing Sector to include Milk, Fruit & Vegetables, Meat, Poultry, fishery, cereal, consumer items, oil seeds, rice milling, flour milling, pulse etc.

Similarly Scheme for Quality Assurance, Codex Standards, R&D and Promotional Activities, is aimed at motivating the food processing industries for adoption of food safety and quality assurance mechanisms such as TQM including ISO 14000, ISO 22000, HACCP, GMP, GHP, and preparing them to face global competition in post WTO Regime. The scheme is also aimed at ensuring that end product / outcome / findings of R&D work should benefit Food Processing Industries in terms of product and process development, improved packaging, value addition and leading to innovative products and processes, with commercial value.

The Scheme for Human Resource Development focuses on developing technologists, managers, Entrepreneurs and manpower for quality management in Food Processing. The scheme also aims at development of rural entrepreneurship and transfer of technology for processing of food products by utilizing locally grown raw material and providing "Hands-on" experience at such production cum training centres, while according priority to SC/ST/OBC and women minorities candidates.

The Scheme for Strengthening of Institutions is aimed at strengthening of existing institutes like Indian Institute of Crop Processing Technology & establishing National Institute of Food Technology and Entrepreneurship Management (NIFTEM). The objective of NIFTEM is to promote cooperation and networking amongst existing institutions both within the country & international bodies, create a complete data base on domestic resources and bring in international best practices for improving the food processing sector. Besides above mentioned institutions, two Boards have been set up under the Ministry *i.e* Indian Grape Processing Board and National Meat and Poultry Processing Board under the scheme.

In addition to the above mentioned schemes, certain fiscal incentives have been given to the food processing industry. Some of these are exemption to fruits and vegetable processing units from paying income tax, reduction of excise duty on ready to eat packaged foods and instant food mixes from 16% to 8%.There is automatic approval for 100% foreign equity in food processing sector.

Resignation of Prasar Bharati Chairman

2682. SHRI M. V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman of Prasar Bharati had resigned over financial misdeeds of the Board and the indifferent attitude of his Ministry as reported in the Mail Today dated 27 May, 2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which Government plans to clean up the Board and ensure its smooth functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) and (b) The Chairman, Prasar Bharati Ras submitted his resignation. He has stated that over the recent months, it has become increasingly difficult to address the proper functioning of the Board and therefore he is compelled to quit well before the expiry of his tenure on 30/4/2011.

(c) The provisions of the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990 do not empower the Government to interfere/intervene in the functioning of Prasar Bharati except under exceptional circumstances provided in the Act itself.